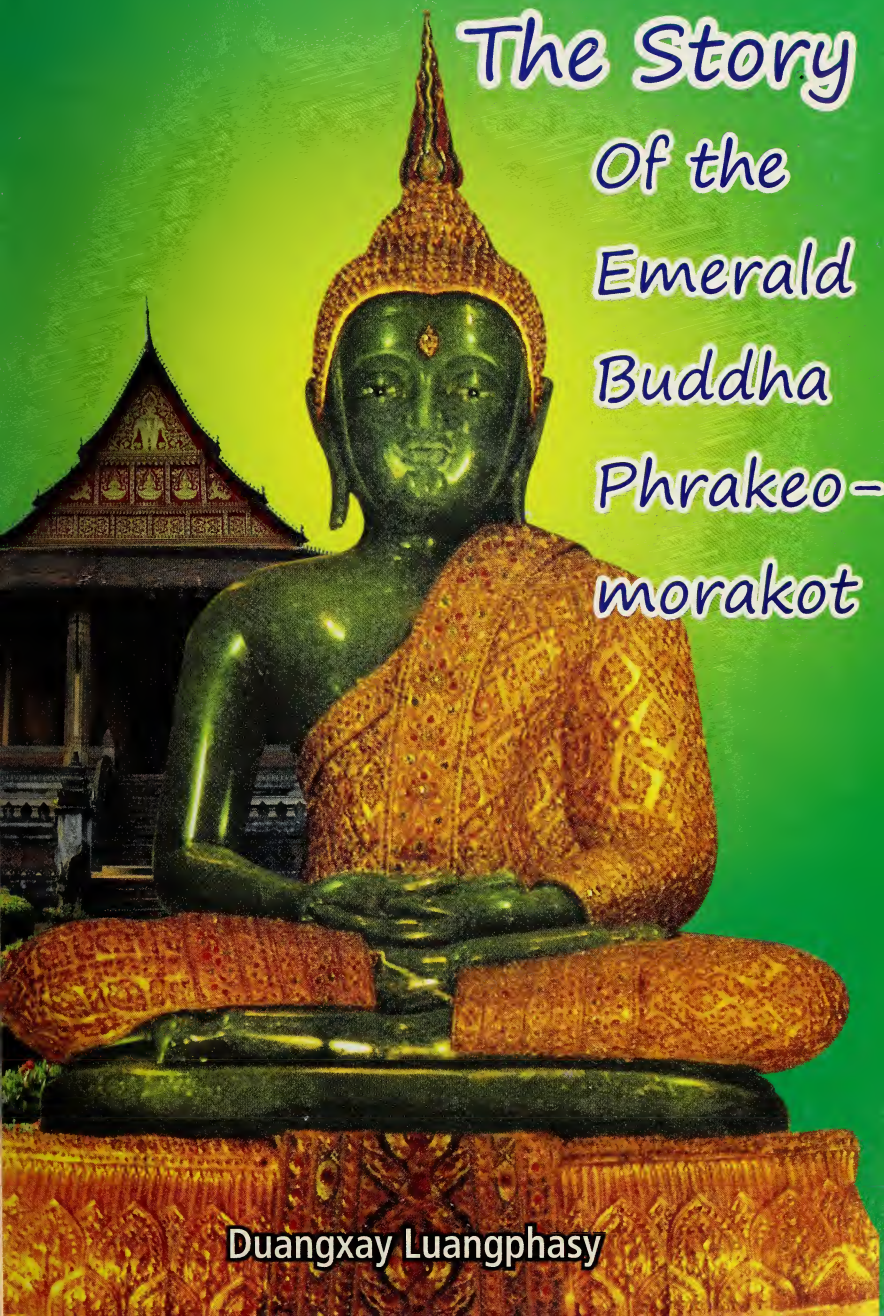


For All Buddhists

The Story Of the Emerald Buddha Phrakeo- morakot



Duangxay Luangphasy



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For All Buddhists...

THE STORY

Of The Emerald Buddha, Phrakeomorakot

Phramaha Rattanapathimakorn Keomorakot

**Phrakeokhiao or Phraphouthaphornmany and or
Phrarattanaphimhuang**

By: Douanxay Louangphrasy

Translated by: Samane Chounlamany

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Printed in Vientiane, Lao PDR

2007

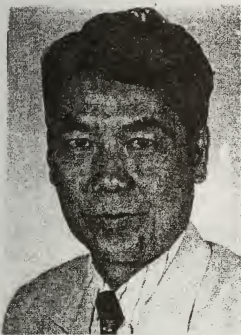
References

1. The Story of Phrakeomorakot
2. Knowledges on the world
3. The World's History

- 1st Publication 08/08/1996
- 2nd Publication 08/08/1997
- 3rd Publication 08/08/1999
- 4th Publication 08/08/2006
- 5th Publication 05/07/2007

Publishing Registration N0 051 ພຈ / 13022007

- Printed in Vientiane
- Quantity 3.000. Samples
- Size 13 x 19 cm
- Printed Date



Note From The Author

*In response to the demand of both Lao readers and those abroad, we are republishing the account of **"The Story of the Phrakeomorakot"** in both English and French. This will benefit those interested in the true story of Phrakeomorakot, which is of special importance as, based on the Story as it has been told from generation to generation, the Phrakeomorakot is not the property of any country or nation, but is the property of all mankind around the world. At the appropriate time, the Phrakeomorakot will travel on another location, staying in each location for no longer than 250 – 300 years, and, according to the prophecy, before it leaves each location, there will be three sinister portents, such as an inundation, disaster or internal disturbance, following which the Phrakeomorakot will be seized by people from another nation or country.*

Douangxay Louangphrasy

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The Story

Of the Emerald Buddha Statue, Or Phrakeomorakot

The **Phramahamani Rattanapathimakorn Keomorakot** is also known as **the Phrakeokhiao, Phraphuthaphonemani, or Phrarattanaphimphouang**

1. The Statue is Installed in Nakhorn Pataliputra

The story of the **Phramahamani Rattanapathimakorn Keomorakot** was written in the "Makhot" language, and is titled "Rattanaphimmavong". It explains the extraordinary origin of the Emerald Buddha Statue as follows:

An heavenly being had created the **Phramahamani Rattanapathimakorn Keomorakot** as an offering to an Arahant (an Enlightened One) called "**Phranakhasen Thera**" (Nagasena), a disciple of **Phradhammarakkhita Thera** staying in Asokarama Temple in the City of Pataliputra, 500 years after the Parinipphane (the passed away) of the Buddha (43 years before Christian Calendar).

The story goes that **Phranakhasen Thera** considered with his divine intelligence that a Buddha Statue should be created for heavenly beings and humankind to pay homage to the Buddha for a period of 5,000 years. However, knowing that the mentality of the common people in becoming more and more dominated by anger, greed and self-deception as history progresses, he reflected that such a statue would likely be stolen and destroyed were it made of gold or other precious materials. **Phranakhasen Thera** then prayed

to obtain the parts that would comprise the body of the Buddha statue as follows¹:

1. The chest
2. The hair
3. The torso
- 4-5. The shoulders
- 6-7. The folded legs, forming the lap

The emerald-colored mass closed together homogeneously without any trace of their having been joined.

Phramahamani Rattanapathimakorn was then installed in Pataliputra City for a period of 300 years (from 43 years before Christian Calendar to year 257).

2. The Statue is Installed in Lanka Thavib (Sri lanka)

Centuries later, there was a king called "**Tak-larat**" reigning in Pataliputra, the uncle of the king **Pulatala Rajaphirat**.

The king **Tak-larat** kept the **Phrakeomorakot** in the traditional, royal manner until he had 2 sons: princes **Phrasirikitti Kumane** (the older) and **Prasirirasachantha Kumane** (the younger).

After the King **Tak-larat** passed away, the Prince **Phrasirikitti Kumane** was invited to take over the royal reign, following his father in succession.

However, at that time, foreign enemies were frequently attacking the country. Some royal dignitaries provoked internal insurrections, putting the people on guard, and causing concern as to the safety of the **Phrakeomorakot**. The people consulted with some rich merchants and agreed to find a refuge for the **Phrakeomorakot**. They then took the **Phrakeomorakot** and the Buddhist scriptures

¹ According to some versions of the story, there were instead only three parts, (1) the torso, (2) the hands, and (3) the legs.

Phrataypidok (Tipitaka) from the temple, and carried them in the boat with families migration from Pataliputra to Sri Lanka.

The King of Lanka Thavib kept the **Phrakeomorakot** in better conditions than it had formerly been granted in Pataliputra City, and arranged a warm welcome for the citizens coming from Pataliputra.

The **Phrakeomorakot** was thus installed in Lanka Thavib for a period more than 200 years, meaning up to the year 1000 of Buddhist Calendar (from year 257 to year 457 of Christian Calendar).

In that era there was a Burmese King called **Chao Anouroutharat**² reigning in the Phramahanakhorn Phukame City³. He was a brilliant and capable King who gained the respect of his people and who was supported by a strong army with plenty of courageous soldiers, elephants and horses. He reined the country with the justice of the *Dhamma*, giving strong support to the promotion of the Buddhism, expanding the Kingdom in terms of the wisdom of its people.

At that time, there was a monk called "**Phrasilakhan**", during his five years of ascetic practices, studying the Buddhist scripture carefully, with a high degree of intelligence, he found that the *Dhamma* as it was written in various forms all over the Burmese Kingdom, was not in accordance with the original teaching of the Buddha, and he went to consult with one of the masters of the era to clarify his doubts about the state of the source texts. The master agreed with **Phrasilakhan** and reported the issue to King **Chao Anouroutharat**.

After being informed, the King **Chao Anouroutharat** was happy to take action to rectify the situation and resolve doubts about the state of their texts. He gave orders to his dignitaries to prepare two boats, sending a royal letter written in the *Makhot* language to Lanka Thavib. The boats were prepared with plenty of royal gifts with various luxurious offerings for the King of Lanka Thavib. A Prince

² Chaoanouroutharat or Phra-anothamanglomaharat was a King of Burma.

³ The Phukam or kukham City was situated along the Burman land in border with actual Thailand.

with high level of dignitaries and 8 virtuous monks were also sent as King's Ambassadors.

King **Chao Anouroutharat** ordered to the Ambassadors to present the Letter and the royal gifts to the King of Lanka Thavib after their arrival. The King of the island at that time was called "**Phrachao Khattiyasiramvong**".

The King of Lanka Thavib was very happy to meet them and offered a honorable welcome to the visitors, as the objective of their voyage on behalf of the King of Nakhorn Phukam was to copy the contents of the original **Phrataypidok (Tipitaka)**.

The King of Phukam Nakhorn made a massive donation of goods and asked for the **Phrakeomorakot** from the King of Lanka Thavib in return. The Sinhalese King could not refuse the demand and was forced to give the Emerald Buddha Statue. After being informed of this fact, the people of Lanka Thavib were very sorrowful.

3. The Statue is Sent to Inthapat Nakhorn

After receiving the **Phrakeomorakot** and copying the Buddhist scriptures **Phrataypidok (Tipitaka)**, the visitors from the Kingdom of Burma traveled back to their Country. On their way back, a powerful cyclone pushed the boats holding the **Phrakeomorakot** and **Phrataypidok (Tipitaka)** off course, to the land of Inthapat Nakhorn.

Informed of the News, The King **Anouroutharat** rushed to Inthapat Nakhorn. Disguising him as a merchant and going to the temple, he recited some magic words that caused a massive fissure in a big stone of the temple. The monks in the temple were surprise by this and asked who he was.

King **Anouroutharat** replied that he was a dignitary of **Phrachao Anouroutharat**, the King of Nakhorn Phukam, in the Kingdom of Burma, and said that the King sent him here to retrieve the boats holding the **Phrakeomorakot** and **Phrataypidok (Tipitaka)**.

Hearing this, the monks went to report the situation to the King of Inthapat Nakhorn, **Phrachao Naraysuriyavong**.

Phrachao Naraysuriyavong replied that the **Phrakeomorakot** is part of the sacred patrimony of the entire world, as it had arrived their country, they could not give it back.

The monks transporting the reply of **Phrachao Naraysuriyavong** to **Phrachao Anouroutharat** made the latter quite angry. He thought that he could take the Statue back by mounting a war, but dissipated his anger by contemplating the teaching of the Buddha, and then decided to try to find another way to make the King of Inthapat Nakhorn contently give him back the **Phrakeomorakot**.

As he thought it over, he walked around the houses of the various dignitaries and courtiers surrounding the palace. He went to the House of the elephants and recited some magic words⁴, causing a column of the elephant house to collapse.

Thus, **Phrachao Naraysuriyavong** became aware of the supernatural powers of the Burmese King, although he still tough of him as merely an emissary, and thought he should establish friendly relations with him because he was afraid of what might be done against his own kingdom with such powers.

Phrachao Naraysuriyavong then ordered his dignitaries to invite the emissary from Phukam to meet him. After talking the matter over, the King of Cambodia gave several verbal promises that he would order to his dignitaries to arrange to send the boats with the **Phrakeomorakot** and the Buddhist scriptures to Phukam Nakhorn to establish good relations between the two countries, and telling **Phrachao Anouroutharat** to go back to Phukam Nakhorn in advance.

After the King of Phukam Nakhorn went back, the King of Cambodia assigned some dignitaries to bring the boats with only the Buddhist

⁴ In some stories it was written that he pissed on the column and this one collapsed.

scriptures back to Phukam Nakhorn, but not the **Phrakeomorakot** as he had promised.

Thus, the King of Phukam Nakhorn received only the Buddhist scriptures, but not the **Phrakeomorakot**. The King felt very sorry about this, but he did not have any bad intentions against the other king. He just carefully studied the **Phrataypidok (Tipikata)** and rectified the texts in his own country to be in accordance with the original teaching, as it was preserved in Sri Lanka, propagating the Buddhist teaching.

His reputation spread as far as Somphu Thavib and China, 1172 years after, the year of 2172 by the Buddhist Calendar (or 1627 AD).

Coming back to Inthapat Mahanakhorn, after the King **Phrachao Naraysuriyavong** had passed away, many Kings reigned successively, all keeping the **Phrakeomorakot** in a state of good maintenance until the reign of Phrachao Senarat.

4. The Statue is Installed in Kungsy Ayouthaya

Later, it happened that the Inthapat Nakhorn was flooded and the **Phrakeomorakot** disappeared. The statue was discovered in the water by a monk in Siam. Seeing it is a good Statue, the monk brought it to offer to the King **Phrachao Atikarajaborom Kasat** of Siam, who maintained the emerald Buddha Statue, making it shine once again, and building a temple in homage to it.

The size of The Phrakeomorakot

The maximum width: 48.3 cm
The height: 66 cm

5. The Statue is Installed in Meuang Kamphengphet (First time)

Later, the King of Meuang Kamphengphet, a cousin of the King of Kungsi-Ayouthaya, came to ask for the possession of the **Phrakeomorakot** and installed it in the Nakhorn Kamphengphet.

6. The Statue is Installed in Meuang Lavo (Lopburi)

Later, the son of the King of Meuang Kamphengphet, took over the reign of Meuang Lavo then asked for the possession of **Phrakeomorakot**, in order to install it in his own capital. However, at that time there were many sculptors producing imitations of the Emerald Buddha Statue.

The King of Meuang Kamphengphet told his son to choose the one he thought to be the original one, from amidst a selection of fakes.

The son could not identify which was the original, he then bribed the guardian of the statue, telling him to put a red flower in front of the original one so that he could identify it.

7. The Statue is Installed in Meuang Kamphengphet (Second time)

The Prince then took the Original **Phrakeomorakot**, brought it by boat to the Meuang Lavo and installed it there for 1 year and 9 months, after which he brought it back to his father at Meuang Kamphengphet.

The King of Xiengray called **Phrachao Phommatham** or **Phrachao Mahaphom** was then reigning on Meuang Xiengray, the kingdom of Yonok Sakounlaochok (Laophoungdam).

The King of Xiengray was an ally of the King of Kamphengphet, and after being informed that the King of Kamphengphet had the **Phrakeomorakot** with him, he sought to possess it. He led his

soldiers to Meuang Kamphengphet as if making a friendly visit, but really seeking to pose a threat, demanding the **Phrakeomorakot**.

Seeing this threat for what it was, the King of Kamphengphet gave over the **Phrakeomorakot** without any resistance. After obtaining the **Phrakeomorakot**, the King of Xiengray led his soldiers back to the capital of his kingdom.

However, The King of Xiengmay called **Phrachao Phoutthavong**, was the uncle of the King of Xiengray had a dispute with his nephew and led his soldiers to attack Meuang Xiengraky.

The King of Xiengray could not resist the attack and worried on the **Phrakeomorakot**, carrying it away, covering it with lime, hiding it among various other Buddha Statues in a large temple.

8. The Statue is Installed in Meuang Xiengray

In the Buddhist Calendar year 1977 (1434 A.D.) **Phrakeomorakot** or **Phrakeokhiao Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn** was discovered in a large old temple in Meuang Xiengray.

During the reign of the King **Phaya Youkhon** over Meuangxoa Luangphrabang from the 1434 to A.D., there was controversy raging among the royalty, because of the Lady Nang Keophimpha wielded indiscriminate power, and would arbitrarily order that her enemies be killed.

Some parts of city's main temple had broken down, so the people of Meuang Xiengray saw the **Golden Buddha Statue** and thought that it should be an important and sacred Buddha Statue, they then brought it to a big temple to install it among many Buddha Statues there.

Two to three months later, the lime coated with gold color covering the fingers of the Buddha Statue flaked away, revealing the green stone beneath. People then scraped off the stucco from the Statue to

see **Emerald Buddha** beneath. It was then burnished to fully reveal its green color, which the locals had never seen before.

People in all over Meuang Xiengray and all Lao people were surprised and the news was reputed in all over the country, with people from all directions coming to pray to the Buddha Statue.

9. The Statue is Installed in Lampang

The Governor of Xiengray sent an official letter to the King of Xiengmay to bring a troop of elephants to welcome the **Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn Keomorakot** and bring it to Xiengmay.

On the way to Xiengmay, arriving at an intersection, the elephant carrying the **Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn Keomorakot** charge off in the direction of Meuang Lampang.

The elephant's driver tried to turn it around to face the route to Xiengmay, but the elephant did not obey its driver and continued running off toward Meuang Lampang.

The driver tried to turn the elephant around many times, but with no success. The elephant continued straight ahead toward Meuang Lampang.

Seeing this, **Thao Phia**, the leader of the elephant troupe, sent people to inform the King of Xiengmay of the unexpected turn of events.

When he learned of these events, the King of Xiengmay who believed in spirits, worried that the Buddha Statue did not want to come to Xiengmay, and he instead accepted that the statue should be brought to Meuang Lampang and had it installed there.

People installed the Buddha Statue in a sacred temple and then built a new temple to house the statue, which was installed in Meuang Lampang for 32 years.

10. The Statue is Installed in Nakhorn Xiengmay

In the year 2009 of Buddhist Calendar (1466 A.D.) the next king in succession in Nakhorn Xiengmay declared that "It is not convenient to have the **Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn Keomoratkot** installed in Nakhorn Lampang, it should be brought to the capital, Meuang Xiengmay".

The King of Nakhorn Xiengmay went then to Nakhorn Lampang to bring the **Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn Keomoratkot** to Meuang Xiengmay. He built a big temple to display in it.

While building temple he tried to set up a crest on the top of its roof, but the crest broke apart and fell down several times, after various sinister portents. Nevertheless, he brought the **Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn Keomoratkot** to be installed in a new temple and opened it for the public to pray and pay homage to the Buddha Statue. The **Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn Keomoratkot** was installed in Meuang Xiengmay for a period of 84 years.

In the year 2091 of Buddhist Calendar (1548 A.D.), Phrachao Saysettha, the older son of the King **Phrachao Phothisarat**⁵ ascended to the throne of Nakhorn Xiengmay. The latter was married with the daughter of the former King of Xiengmay⁶, Princess "Phranang Yotkham", and the couple gave birth to a son called **Phrachao Xaysettha**.

When **Phrachao Xaysettha** was 14 years old, the King of Xiengmay, his grand father died without an heir to continue his reign, **Thao Phia** and various **senior monks** went to ask **Phrachao Xaysettha** to take over the reign of Nakhorn Xiengmay. After taking the throne, he adopted a full name of "**Phrachao Xaysetthathirat**". Later on, he ascended to the reign of Nakhorn Xiengthong Louangphrabang becoming then the King reigning over two countries.

⁵ Phrachao Phothisarat or Phrachao Phothisane

⁶ Chao Nakhorn Xiengmay was the grand father of Phrachao Xaysetthathirat

11. The Statue is Installed in Nakhorn Xiengthong Louangphrabang

After his first 3 years reigning over Nakhorn Xiengmay, the father of **Phrachao Xayasetthathirat** of Nakhorn Louangphrabang passed away and one of **Xayasetthathirat's** half-brothers took over the throne in the interim.

Phrachao Xayasetthathirat wanted to return to Meuang Louangphrabang to attend to his father's funeral, and to visit his other relatives and people there.

Before his departure, **Phrachao Xayasetthathirat** hesitated, as he was unsure as to whether, after going to Louangphrabang, he would be able to come back to reign over Nakhorn Xiengmay or not? Or some plot against him could arise while he was away from his throne.

He decided to bring the **Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn Keomoratkot** with him under the pretext that it was for a religious ceremony dedicated to his deceased relatives, and so that the Lao dignitaries could pay homage to it.

Thus it was on the year 2093 of Buddhist Calendar (1550 A.D.) that **Phrachao Xayasetthathirat** went to Louangphrabang, bringing **Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn Keomoratkot** with him. On his arrival in Louangphrabang, he installed the **Phrakeomoratkot** in a temple and attend religious ceremonies to pay homage to his father.

In Meuang Xiengmay, the dignitaries figure out that **Phrachao Xayasetthathirat** had gone to Loangphrabang for long time and perhaps would not come back, so they consulted with a monk called "Mekuthi", a descendant from the Xiengmay's royal, family and invited him to take over the reign of Xiengmay.

12. The Statue is Installed in Nakhorn Vientiane

Wars between Laos, Thailand and Burma soon provoked disturbances all over the region, and **Phrachao Xayasetthathirat** decided that Kungsy Sattanakhanahut Xiengthong Louangphrabang was not an appropriate Capital for the Kingdom because it was situated too close to Burma. As Burma had already annexed Xiengmay, it might mobilize an army to attack Xiengthong Louangphrabang next.

In the year 2103 of the Buddhist Calendar (1560 A.D.), **Phrachao Xayasetthathirat** established Vientiane as the capital, giving it the name of "**Kungsy Sattanakhanahut Utama Rajathany**", at which time he brought **Phrakeomoratkot** to be installed in Vientiane.

219 years later, in 2103 to 2322 (1779 A.D.), during the reign of the King **Phrachao Siribounyasane** or **Phrachao Ongboun** or **Somdet Phramahaboun Xayasetthathirat**, the son of **Phrachao Ongve** who had reigned in Vientiane since the year 2278 of the Buddhist Calendar (1735 A.D.), there was a conflict with **Phravorarat** who claimed for the position of Royal Advisor. However, **Phrachao Siribounyasane** awarded the position to his younger brother instead, and a civil war ensued⁷.

The civil wars continued for many years, with **Phrachao Siribounyasane** fighting to suppress **Phravorarat's** forces.

⁷ In some stories it was written that Phrachao Siribounyasane asked for the daughter of Phravorarat to be married with him because the last one had big influence and worried that he may argue for the possession of part of the Kingdom and in some stories it was written that Phrachao Siribounyasane did not have confidence with Phravorarat because the last one had tendency for Louangphrabang.

13. The Statue is Installed in Kungthep Phramahanakhorn of Thailand.

Taking advantage from the civil wars and internal conflicts in Laos, the King of Thailand⁸ took the opportunity to mobilize large numbers of soldiers under the command of **Phaya Mahakasatseuk**⁹ to attack and seize all 3 Lao Kingdoms¹⁰: The **Lanexang Louanphrabang**, **Nakhorn Vientiane** and **Nakhorn Champassack**.

The Thai army burned down Nakhorn Vientiane and took the **Phrakeomorakot**, which had been installed in Nakhorn Vientiane for a period of 219 years, to be installed in Kungthep (Bangkok), where it remains at present.

The Source of the Story

The account was written in the 1st day, 5th month, year 1151 of Chula Sakarat Calendar, corresponding with "Pivork" (the year of monkey)¹¹, it was the 7th year of the 1st reign of the Kungthep Dynasty.

At that time the King of Nakhorn Louangphrabang¹² went down to visit Phrabat Somdet Phraphuthayotfa Chulalok at Kungtep City.

Phrachao Nanthasene had brought the written story of the Buddha Statue (Phramahamany Rattanapathimakorn Keomoratkot) written in lao language in *Baylane* leaves with him, to offer to the King of Thailand.

The King of Thailand then gave orders to Phraya Xiengkhoa and Phraya Xiengphene to translate it from lao into thai. The story of Phrakeomorakot has been widely published in the public domain since that time¹³.

⁸ Phrachao Taksin

⁹ Phaya Mahakasatseuk later became the King of Thailand in the Dynasty of Chackrirat 1 with his descendants until the actual King.

¹⁰ Thailand had seized the 3 kingdoms of Laos converting them in colonies of Thailand.

¹¹ Day 20 May

¹² It was Phrachao Nanthasene

¹³ Laotian people translated the story of Phrakeomorakot from Bali and Makhot languages

A Timeline of the Changing Location Of the Phrakeomorakot

B.C. 500 (43 years before Christian Calendar)	An Orahant called "Phranakhasene Thera" had created Phrakeomorakot at Meuang Patalibout (After the Buddha had passed away for 500 years)
B.C. 500-800 (-43 to 257 A.D.)	Stay in Nakhorn Patalibout City for 300 years
B.C. 800-1000 (257-457 A.D.)	Stay in Lanka Thavib (Srilanka) for 200 years
B.C.	Stay in Cambodia (for unknown period)
B.C.	Stay in Kamphengphet (1 st time) for unknown period
B.C.	Stay in Nakhorn Si-ayuthaya (for unknown period)
B.C. 1506-1508 (963-965 A.D.)	Stay in Meuang Lavo (Lobbuly) for 1 year and 9 months
B.C.	Stay in Kamphengphet (2 nd time) for unknown period
B.C. 1977 (1434 A.D.)	Stay in Xiengray (for unknown period)
B.C. 1977-2009 (1434-1466 A.D.)	Stay in Lampang for 32 years
B.C. 2009-2093 (1466-1550 A.D.)	Stay in Xiengmay for 84 years
B.C. 2093-2103 (1550-1560 A.D.)	Stay in Nakhorn Xiengthong Louangphraban for 10 years
B.C. 2103-2322 (1560-1779 A.D.)	Stay in Nakhorn Vientiane for 219 years
B.C. 2322-2550 (1779-2007)	Stay in Kungthep for 228 years up to now

Note: B.C. = *Buddhist Calendar*

The age of Phrakeomorakot up to Buddhist Calendar Year 2540 was
2050 years old.

Douangxay Louangphrasy

